

Although she died in 1935, her message lives on at the Birdcraft Bird Sanctuary which remains a museum containing exhibits of Connecticut wildlife and providing frequent tours for school children.

All five of these inductees are richly deserving of this award. I am pleased, indeed, that their remarkable lives will now become better known to the people of Connecticut and the United States for generations to come.●

#### VETERANS' EQUALITY FOR TREATMENT AND SERVICES ACT OF 1998

● Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, as Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I have sought recognition to express my support for the Medicare subvention demonstration project legislation which has been introduced by Senator JEFFORDS. This important legislation was approved by the Senate last year as part of the Balanced Budget Act, but the measure was stricken from the final version of that legislation in conference. I hope that this year, the House will recede from its objections, and we can send this legislation, which is supported by the Administration, to the President for his signature.

This bill would begin the process of opening a new—and vitally needed—source of funding for the provision of health care services by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). It would grant to VA, on a demonstration project basis, the authority to collect and retain funds from Medicare—just as VA collects reimbursement funds from veterans' private insurance carriers—for the costs associated with treating Medicare-eligible veterans' non-service-connected illnesses and injuries.

The Balanced Budget Act specifies that appropriated funding for the provision of health care services by VA will be flat over the next five fiscal years. At the same time, 7.7 million World War II veterans and 4.5 million Korean War veterans—veterans who are eligible for Medicare benefits—will require extensive health care assistance as they age. It is critical that these veterans be allowed to bring their Medicare benefits to VA so that VA might be better able to meet their needs.

This legislation will surely assist VA by providing a new revenue stream. But it will also benefit Medicare. Under the plan set out in this legislation, VA would be reimbursed at a level not to exceed 95% of the rate Medicare would otherwise pay a private hospital for care supplied to a Medicare-eligible veterans. In summary, under this legislation Medicare would receive care for its veteran beneficiaries at a discount, and VA would receive a vitally needed new source of funding.

Medicare subvention legislation is supported by all of the members of the Veterans Affairs Committee. It is sup-

ported by the Administration. All of the major veterans' service organizations have urged enactment of this legislation. And, as I previously noted, the Senate approved this legislation last year as part of the Senate-approved Balanced Budget Act.

I am pleased to add my name to this bill as a cosponsor, and I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.●

#### RECOGNITION OF DR. LOUIS AVIOLI

● Mr. BOND. Mr. President, on May 19, an endowed lectureship, at Washington University in my home State of Missouri, will be named in honor of Louis Avioli, M.D., for his contribution to the field of bone and mineral metabolism. Washington University and St. Louis University employ the largest group of bone research scientists in the world. Dr. Avioli is known as a legend in this field and for good reason.

Dr. Avioli is the founder of the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research (ASBMR), and is responsible for individually combining the growing research interests beginning from a large range of disciplines into what is now the top scientific society devoted to bone and mineral research. The membership of ASBMR has grown to more than 3,000 scientists and more than 5,000 attend the annual convention. Dr. Avioli has been appointed to numerous positions, been published countless times and has several honorary degrees.

With so many impressive accomplishments, it is no wonder an endowed lectureship is named in his honor. Commending Dr. Avioli for his many years of service to the field of bone and mineral metabolism, I am glad to say that the State of Missouri is enriched with his wisdom and leadership. I join the many who congratulate and thank him for his hard work and wish him continued success in future years.●

#### VETERANS' EQUALITY FOR TREATMENT AND SERVICES (VETS) ACT OF 1998

● Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, as a supporter of the Veterans' Equality for Treatment and Services Act of 1998, introduced last Friday by Senator JEFFORDS on behalf of myself, Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator SPECTER, and Senator MURKOWSKI, I am committed to ensuring that our aging veterans have access to quality, affordable, reliable, and convenient health services.

However, as budgets decrease so, unfortunately, do services provided. The demonstration project outlined in the VETS Act of 1998 will allow Medicare to reimburse the VA for its services without putting a strain on the Medicare trust, and will provide an additional funding source for the VA. The project authorized by this legislation will be conducted over a three-year period, at up to 12 sites across the nation, and annual Medicare spending will be

capped. Safeguards will also be imposed to ensure the cap is not exceeded. This bill may even save Medicare dollars by imposing a mandatory five percent discount on its reimbursement for services provided to veterans.

Those targeted by this legislation are lower- and middle-income veterans who are no longer eligible for treatment at the VA because of its constrained resources. People like Mr. John C. Elkins, of Columbia, South Carolina, who is in his late seventies and who served over 28 years in the military. Recently, Mr. Elkins wrote this in a letter to me: "Oh, I know some think we hang on to life and drain government resources that are being paid for by the younger workers. But I must ask you and those who question us: isn't three wars in a lifetime worth something?"

The veterans of our nation have served honorably and faithfully, often under perilous conditions, and they have sacrificed both with the loss of their lives and with their livelihoods. Thousands of veterans have experienced any number of health care problems. These veterans should have the same access to health care as all other Americans and, quite frankly, Mr. President, they deserve more for the sacrifices they have made.

Mr. President, you will remember what my good friend, the late President John F. Kennedy said in his inaugural address: "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." The men and women of the armed services, our veterans, did just that. They answered their country's call to duty, and in response they were often put in harm's way. They served 24 hours a day, seven days a week, all around the world. They continue to support and defend our nation's interests, and I believe it is time our nation supported their interests.

I urge my distinguished colleagues to join Senators JEFFORDS, ROCKEFELLER, SPECTER, MURKOWSKI, and me in supporting the VETS Act of 1998. It is among the very least that we in Congress can do to continue our support for these veterans, like Mr. Elkins, who have given so much to this country, while at the same time helping to preserve the VA medical system and the Medicare trust.●

#### RECOGNITION OF CFIDS AWARENESS DAY

● Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to reaffirm my support for the tireless efforts of the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Association of Lehigh Valley to fight Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome (CFIDS), or Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS).

For six years, the CFS Association of Lehigh Valley has been dedicated to finding a cure for CFIDS, increasing public awareness, and supporting victims of this disease. The Lehigh Valley organization is actively involved in